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ABSTRACT

Since the 1950s the assumption that prejudice or ethnocentrism is a single entity with many causes has governed social scientific work on prejudice. The way society talks about prejudices has become an obstacle to real understanding. This book offers an alternative theory that is a claim that different prejudices are characteristic of different psychic or character types and that different social conditions promote different character types and their corresponding prejudices. An historical approach is adopted to reveal in detail the theoretical problems and to establish a typology of prejudices. The first part of the book sets out the critical-theoretical agenda and treats work done in the social sciences. The second part of the book defines the typology. In general, there are prejudices that help protect a group's identity, such as ethnocentrism, and those that project a group identity, called ideologies of desire. There are other prejudices such as socioeconomic phenomena, attitudes toward governments, products of historical periods, social mechanisms of defense, sexual fantasy structures, and puberty rites. Particular attention is paid to four types: (1) antisemitism; (2) white racism; (3) sexism; and (4) homophobia. (Contains 483 references.) (SLD)

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